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INFORMATION REPORT INFORMATION REPORT
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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C-O-N-F-I-D-E-N-T-I-A-L

COUNTRY	Hungary	REPORT NO.		50X1
SUBJECT	Training Centers for Industrial Apprentices	DATE DISTR.	3 November 1955	
		NO. OF PAGES	3	
DATE OF INFO.		REQUIREMENT NO.	RD	50X1
PLACE ACQUIRED		REFERENCES		
DATE ACQUIRED				

SOURCE EVALUATIONS ARE DEFINITIVE. APPRAISAL OF CONTENT IS TENTATIVE.

SOURCE:		50X1
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STATE	#	X	ARMY	#	X	NAVY	#	X	AIR	#	X	FBI		AEC					
(Note: Washington distribution indicated by "X"; Field distribution by "#".)																			

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REPORT NO.

50X1

COUNTRY Hungary

DATE DISTR. 21 Sept. 1955

SUBJECT Training Centers for Industrial Apprentices

NO. OF PAGES 2

DATE OF INFORMATION

REFERENCES:

50X1

PLACE ACQUIRED

THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

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SOURCE

Industrial apprentice training centers were under the supervision of the Labor Reserve Office (Munkaerő-tartalékok Hivatala). Because schooling was compulsory up to the age of 14, boys and girls started their apprenticeship only after graduating from a secondary school. Although this ruling was presumably enforced, a number of apprentices who had not finished their eight years of compulsory education and some of whom were under the age of 14. An apprenticeship lasted for two years with one additional year to qualify as a skilled worker. During the first two years, apprentices received a small amount of money, their clothing, room, and board, as wages. During the third year, when they no longer attended training classes, they received as little as 200 to 300 forints monthly for working in factories or enterprises. These training centers were located near factories or industrial centers.

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During the two years of training, apprentices had three days a week of practical training and spent the remaining three days at theoretical training. Political education was as important as it was in the high schools and was included in the weekly schedule; as in the high schools, the Union of Working Youth (Dolgozó Ifjúság Szövetsége - DISZ) ensured that all apprentices attended the political lectures and learned their lessons.

Most of the teachers in the training centers were not necessarily teachers by profession but were former workers who had been trained for their jobs by the Labor Reserve Office. The teachers wore the same uniforms as the apprentices except for an insignia which indicated rank.

In their free time, the apprentices marched or roamed through the streets in groups; they were loud, bad-mannered, rowdy, and used vulgar language. Because their uniforms were black and because of their generally bad behavior, they were called "Black Ravens". Parents who did not want their children exposed to these apprentices in the dormitories required their children to live at home.

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5. [redacted] Chinese visitors from the World Federation of Democratic Youth (WFDY) Headquarters to Diosgyör where a training center made a fairly good impression on them. The workshops were well equipped and the buildings were clean. A reformatory was attached to this center but the occupants of both places were completely separated.

5. [redacted] 20 WFDY staff members to the Mátyás Rákosi center on Illatos Road, Budapest IX. This center consisted of more than 20 one or two-story barrack-like buildings in which about 1,000 apprentices lived. One of the buildings contained a gymnasium which had all types of sports equipment; sports were considered to be very important in developing Communist discipline and the apprentices were required to spend much of their free time practicing sports. This center had permanent medical services available, although the hygienic conditions were very bad. About 20 to 30 apprentices slept in one room which was filthy and smelly. The apprentices were unable to change their uniforms regularly because they received only one winter uniform, one summer uniform, and limited poor-quality underwear.

The uniforms were like those worn by the Hungarian soldiers. The winter uniform consisted of black trousers, a flat black cap, black overcoat, and a black jacket with light blue shoulder boards; the girls wore black skirts. For summer, the apprentices wore sand-colored trousers or skirts, a sand-colored cap, and a sand-colored jacket with light blue shoulder boards. Because of the climate, the winter uniform was worn most of the year. [redacted] the dining room of the center, one of the apprentices exclaimed, "how happy we are that you came, we will receive more and better food tonight." The food served that day was hardly edible and was not a well-balanced meal. The dining room was almost as dirty as the sleeping quarters though it was presumably cleaned up on the occasion of the visit by the WFDY staff members.

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